



UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ SERVING THE CITIZENS OF IDAHO

LARRY CRAIG

NEWS RELEASE

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CRAIG COMMENTS ON THE PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION SPEECH

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Senator Larry Craig made the following remarks following President Bush's State of the Union speech:

"The President stayed true to form and presented bold initiatives to tackle long-standing problems.

"The War on Terror is clearly on everyone's mind. It is the right thing to do, and I appreciate the President's willingness to stand strong for liberty in the face of totalitarian extremism.

"The situation in Iraq remains very dangerous, but I do not believe that all hope is lost. Just today, General Petraeus, an outstanding General and expert on counter-insurgency, was before the Senate Armed Services Committee testifying for his nomination to be the new Commander in charge of Iraq. General Petraeus supported the reinforcement of 21,500 troops into Baghdad and Anbar province in order to help the Iraqi Army establish a level of stability that will allow the Iraqi government the space and time they need to take control of their country. I am hopeful that the Senate can act very quickly to confirm General Petraeus so he can get on the ground and begin his critical work.

"I am disappointed that some Members of Congress have decided to introduce resolutions condemning the President's new plan. These resolutions will embolden our enemies and send the wrong message to our servicemen and women fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although it appears likely that the Senate will vote on one of these resolutions, we are hog-tying the hands of General Petraeus before he can even get started on the ground. I plan on opposing any resolution that I see as unproductive to our efforts in Iraq and hope that many of my colleagues will join me.

"At home, our health care insurance system is broken. Both the President and I have long advocated for equality in tax deductions for health insurance, for greater transparency in health care costs, competition in insurance, portability, and individual control over health care choices. The President's initiative recognizes that and moves us in the right direction. Unfortunately, the accompanying tax increase will be impossible to swallow.

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“I support the President's call for us to reduce our dependence on unfriendly foreign sources of foreign oil by reducing our overall use of oil by 20% within the next ten years.

“My priority has been to facilitate incentives for producing alternative fuels from Idaho’s abundant resources, such as cellulosic ethanol, biodiesel, and hydrogen from next generation nuclear plants. The President’s commitment will put an end to the growth of CO2 from transportation, allowing us to ultimately provide the fuels and technology for the United States to lead the world in reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses. I also agree that the Congress should provide the President with the authority to increase the efficiency of our automobiles. Efficiency and conservation make good economic sense, good energy security policy, and are the strongest and quickest first steps toward reducing the impacts of energy consumption on the environment.”